

THE
METAMORPHOSIS
OF A
PRUDE.
A
POEM.

HAUD IMPUNE FERES, ADIMAM TIBI NEMPE FIGURAM.

OVID.

L O N D O N :

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THE

METAMORPHOSIS

OF A

P. R. U. D. E.

A

MASSACHUSETTS

LOWE

MASSACHUSETTS

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T O

Mrs. - - - - -

M A D A M,

I Take the Liberty of addressing you as a Patronefs; the following poetical Fable having its Foundation in Faët, at a Time when the fair Object of my Muse's Discipline was well known to you in your Maiden State; when your easy, chearful and affable Behaviour, free from all prudish Affectation, yet attended with a native modest Dignity, rendered you an agreeable Pattern and Exemplar to all your fair Virgin Companions, except that unhappy one, whose untoward and severe Disposition deprived her of improving thereby those other Gifts and Endowments of which (with-

out Fear of offending your Candour I have the Boldness to say) Nature had not been illiberal to her. But she is no more; and I chose to delay Publication of my Poem till now, although written long since; that others, besides you, Madam, of her Acquaintance (if any should happen to know her in her poetical Dress) may be convinced that I am not moved hereto by any Sort of personal Pique or Revenge. And though I have satiriz'd the over-rigid Carriage of the Prude, yet I am far from giving Encouragement to any Degree of wanton Behaviour; nor can I approve of Coquetry more than Prudery. These are the two Extremes, between which you, Madam, having so judiciously steered your steady Course free from Shipwreck of Quiet or Reputation, are happily arrived in the safe Harbour of Matrimony. But the stiff Female Precisian being my poetic Theme; give me Leave, Madam, to make use of what you once observed, when in Conversation on that Subject started by me; to wit: That her boasted Virtue is not always of the genuine Sort, but springs from an ill-natured Pride, and ambitious Desire of being admired for Particularity. And though she is ever declaiming against the most innocent Gallantry, yet she is never more inwardly pleased than when any Devoirs are paid to her, though even from a Coxcomb. But Men of Sense are not such shallow Heroes, as to maintain a painful and expensive Trojan Siege to gain at last, perhaps, (for all her Prudery) a mere HELEN; or, at best, a Nest of Wasps, whose Plunder cannot make Amends for its stinging Plagues.

That

(5)

That you, Madam, may long continue to enjoy that social Bliss to which your Generosity and Good-nature led you, and so well entitles you, is the sincere Wish of,

M A D A M,

Your most obedient Servant.



THE

That you, Madam, may long continue to enjoy that social life
to which your Gratitude and Good nature led you, and so wish you
that you in the future may be H E

T A M O R P H O S I S
M A D A M

O P A

That you, Madam, may long continue to enjoy that social life

R U D E

THE



T H E
M E T A M O R P H O S I S
O F A
P R U D E.

YE PRUDES, who ne'er such Liberty can brook
 As chaste DIANA with ENDYMION took,
 When on the CARIAN Mountain she would deign
 To steal soft Kisses from the sleeping Swain,
 To you I sing; to you these Lays belong;
 Attend the Tenor of my Moral Song.

Where LEW'SHAM's lengthen'd Cottages extend,
 And tow'ring Mountains o'er the Vale impend,

Late

Late PHILLIS dwelt, but now, alas! we find
 Another Form contains her prudish Mind.
 The Queen of Charms bade each alluring Grace
 Adorn her Shape, her Gesture and her Face;
 But JUNO, pleas'd the Queen of Love to thwart,
 With Pride perverted and obdur'd her Heart.
 Against the PAPHIAN Queen and Love she rav'd,
 As Powers obscene, that human Souls inflav'd.
 Where e'er she darts the Light'ning of her Eyes,
 Each love-sick Swain with hopeless Ardour dies.
 Each vocal Cave repeats the Lover's Pain,
 Each carved Bark records the Victim slain;
 Unmov'd she hears the eccho'd Sighs, and sees
 Unmov'd the dire Inscription on the Trees.

Thus tyranniz'd the Nymph; at length a Swain,
 One of the num'rous, the rejected, Train,
 MYRTILLO, flies to sacred Verse for Aid
 Against the Rigour of th' obdurate Maid.

(For

(For PHOEBUS, who himself so oft hath try'd
 A Lover's Pains, when cross'd by female Pride,
 To his PARNASSUS bids the Youth repair,
 And with the MUSES ease his am'rous Care)
 With Verse the Swain address'd the Pow'rs of Love,
 Verse there prevails, which fail'd the Nymph to move;
 His Torments and her Scorn those Gods provoke,
 Who thus, united in their Anger, spoke:
 " Shall then a Mortal, impious and vain,
 " Our Pow'r deny and sacred Laws disdain:
 " Laws form'd to please with a delightful Sway,
 " And charm all living Nature to obey!
 " We vernal ZEPHYR with gay FLORA wed,
 " And for their Loves th' enamel'd Carpet spread.
 " To us VERTUMNUS owes his fruitful Bride;
 " We gave the Dow'r, the rich Autumnal Pride.
 " Our Infl'ence joins the Woodland Nymphs and Fawns
 " In mystic Dance upon the verdant Lawns.

B

" And

- “ And though blue NEPTUNE rules the briny Main,
“ He and his Subjects own our happy Reign.
“ JOVE’s royal Bird, prefer’d his Bolts to bear,
“ Submits with all his Vassals of the Air.
“ From the fierce Lion to the reptile Race,
“ All yield to Love, the rapt’rous Joy embrace.
“ All Life through us is frolicksome and gay,
“ And we uphold all Beings from Decay.
“ And shall this Maid perverse---but let her try
“ What Vengeance waits her if she not comply.”

This said, they bade the favour’d Vot’ry go
And ask three Kisses, as their PLENIPO.

The pleasing Charge the ready Youth obey’d,
And soon explor’d the fair delinquent Maid;
Recumbent o’er a crystal Fount she sat,
NARCISSUS like, her Charms to contemplate;
To whom the Youth; “ Ah, self-deluded Fair!
“ For whom dost thou adjust that auburn Hair?

“ To

“ To whom display each brilliant Beam and Grace,

“ And all the Wonders of thy Neck and Face ?

“ Those Gifts the genial Pow'rs would ne'er afford,

“ For Self alone, or Miser-like to hoard ;

“ Bestow'd in vain if ne'er to be employ'd,

“ They only are in social Bliss enjoy'd.”

This said, his high Commission he declares,

And to assume the Tribute due prepares.

But she reply'd, “ From me demand no Dues ;

“ Those Pow'rs may seek them of their Subject Stews ;

“ And quickly quit thy insolent Embrace,

“ Or tenfold Vengeance shall imprint thy Face.”

The Youth drew back, and with Amazement view'd

Within so fair a Form a Mind so rude,

And cry'd, “ Alas, that such a barb'rous Guest

“ Should of so sweet a Mansion be possess'd !”

He scarce had ended, when ('tis strange to say !)

Her beauteous Form began to sink away ;

Her

Her Soul, as by Degrees it naked grew,
 For proper Cloathing proper Atoms drew,
 And Organs suitable appear'd to view.

Her Eyes like livid Light'ning seem to glare,
 And inward Savageness of Mind declare;

Her polish'd Hands contract to hairy Paws,
 And oval Nails extend to crooked Claws;

The party-colour'd Manteau's now supply'd
 By apter Covering, a tabby Hide:

As by the Fan, when manag'd with Address,
 She us'd the Flutt'rings of her Mind t'express,
 Now by her Tail is understood no less.

As erst, when courted by the am'rous Male,
 With screaming Voice her Custom's still to rail,
 To spit, and scratch, and shew her spiteful Spleen,
 And all the Prude now in the CAT is seen.

The E N D.